

# Is there anything that you think paleoartists could be doing to improve conditions or opportunities within the field?

*Line breaks indicate divisions between responses.*

Reach out to communities beyond the inner paleoart circle. Get more people interested, increase the field's potential as a sustainable business practice for more people.

I think there is an inherent bias towards them, as there is towards all artists, making a proper living off art that needs to first be addressed.

1. Never work for free! 2. Do not undersell yourself and charge reasonable, even if you do not count yourself to the top tier! Dumping prices hurt the whole field!

As someone coming from a general illustration background I do not have many contacts in the scientific community or educational publishing industry, it would honestly be nice to see more workshops, events, or even just general listings for that type of work. Not everyone can make it across the country to go to one conference that they might be able to make contacts at. Heck, even a guide with recommendations for where to look or how to get your name out to places might be nice.

I question the immediate jump to not explore more fantastical elements of piece design (e.g. realistic Jurassic Park)

Frequent and regular conferences, exhibitions and fairs

Be more critical of themselves and each other- in an attempt to improve the quality of everyone's work.

No. I'm only an amateur, but most professionals I've seen have been very open and helpful when it comes to others in the field besides themselves.

In general, paleoartists may benefit from a business management short course, as well as learning how to create professional contracts. This may, in turn, solve some of the issues surrounding clients.

stop being whiny shade-casting dickholes, especially online.

Possibly having more tight knit online groups open to discussion about many different topics on paleoart and paleontology in general

Not an issue with paleoart itself but more over in paleontology. Safekeeping is a major problem, some much information is pay gated or put out for public knowledge

More recognition

team up in associations?

Encouraging and promoting diversity (of artists) within palaeoart.

We might consider forming a standard, recommended contract agreement for paleoart commissions. There's a lot of young people on the field, just starting and not sure how to handle commissions professionally - and probably not part of any professional artist's associations that could help. Having a blank contract to use as a model might help them avoid all sorts of trouble with clients. Recommended commission prices would be a lot more difficult, since we're a global community, and the value of money varies wildly.

Refer one another if you think you know someone better suited to the task

A better access to scientific data and resources would be desirable, with maybe a website centering accessible up-to-date scientific information relevant for paleoart, to help understand the scientific backup (or absence of it) of new trends (ex. lips for theropods, feathers, muscle insertion...) with maybe the help of paleoartists explaining their process ?

Stop doing work for cheap/free. Artists who do this many still live with parents and don't have bills. I was told by an author, after I gave my price for one color image, that he could only afford a half size black and white based on my rates (which were below standard) Then I found out one single artist is doing all 60 of the other images in the book. The only conclusion I can come to is they're undercharging or doing it for free.

Sometimes it feels that people are pressured to follow either solely palaeoart or palaeontological research as a career path, with no overlap. In my experience the best palaeoart comes from those with a passion for both these areas so I feel like it should not be discouraged.

An elitist, petty attitude is either intimidating to newcomers or encourages emulation of said attitude amongst newcomers. Palaeoartists of all skill levels should engage with audiences as calmly and objectively as possible, and steer away from toxic interactions. Pettyness is totally unwarranted in scientific discourse, regardless of context.

Have a bigger influence in media. Be more involved in the creation of films and documentaries. Pursue studios to start interesting projects.

Video Games and Movies need more accurate dinosaurs, so extend palaeoart to concept art could be a way.

Along with art, provide explanations for these animals and what we know about them for the uninitiated. Paleoart is not an elitist art form, it's for the better of the general public.

Maintain strictness on accuracy, but be wary and have restraint when it comes to critiquing people who are evidently new or uninformed. We, as a community, have a tendency to be quite harsh when we see, say, a scaly dromaeosaur drawn by somebody who clearly doesn't know any better, and it can make mingling with the palaeoartist community quite daunting for newbies. Remember that not everyone has had access to the same information we have.

No, I feel that paleoart is doing exactly what it is supposed to be doing. People are making incredible, scientifically accurate works, and the public is seeing it.

Promoting creativity and reasonable speculation.

More open communication between the paleoart the scientist, the public as well as the art world.

To raise more awareness for our very existence and the work we do, as well as its importance, value and history.

Please be more patient for those who dont get your stuff.

Look out for those who are just beginning to enter the field. As freelancers (which most paleoartists probably are) we shouldn't think of the field as competition. Instead, a "we're all in this together" approach would do wonders. Unionizing could be beneficial to amplifying our voices and engaging with the paleontological community, especially considering some of the atrocious paleoart that has accompanied recent publications. Not to name names, but the works accompanying the early 2019 publications of *Eretmorhipis* and pterosaur filaments are pretty much unacceptable from a scicomm perspective. Paleontologists need to understand the power illustrations have (ie their importance to scientific communication), and it's up to paleoartists to communicate this to them.

Calling out plagiarism more, as well as uncredited art use.

Everyone could stop being a jerk, for one. It's pretty unfortunate, but a lot of people interested in paleoart are unfriendly and unwelcoming to those from outside

Less gatekeeping/dismissing of simple questions from casual viewers.

Make it easier to get started professionally.

Promoting less toxic interactions within the community

Be open to new ideas, and educate people about the importance paleoart plays in our perspective of the past.

I think Brian Engh's SummonENGH contest last fall was a great way for up and coming artists and amateurs to put their work on display, and of course the monetary reward that came with that was helpful incentive and gave the winner some more funds to keep working. I know that money isn't easy to come by in this field, so events with those parameters aren't always feasible, but if you're perusing through your social media feed and you enjoy the work of someone you've not encountered before, I imagine sharing can go a long way to help them!

Talk to visitors in the paleontological museums about their work and how it is related to the fossil.

I think more of an open minded mentality is required in the community if we are to grow it as a whole. It seems easy to develop an attitude of exclusivity in a field that requires such an extensive knowledge base. I believe that the majority of paleoartists efforts should be making the flow of knowledge easier for those who have not invested the time and resources into developing such an extensive understanding of the many fields and areas that can be focused on in paleontology and paleoart as a whole.

TALK TO EACH OTHER. We need to stop with the scarcity mentality already. There is enough work for us all and we are stronger as colleagues than as competitors. Our goals are generally the same. Make referrals, make introductions, hold social meetups, encourage a sense of camaraderie and unity. We need to teach the younger crowd of up and coming paleoartists how to listen and take critique by DOING SO OURSELVES.

Provide information to beginners.

Bring more welcoming towards new paleoartists and the like

Joining game project or films

Engage with the public. Paleoart is not and should not be restricted to some dark corner of the internet or just behind the walls of museums. If one thing, our greatest public are the lay people who so often are marvelled by the world before us. So paleoart should bring those worlds to these people, be part of their medium. Books, toy lines, videogames, series, documentaries, all of these complemented by accurate and science-based art can bring the public more into our world and delve deeper into the rich knowledge we've unearthed.

Don't plagiarize & call it those who do plagiarize, don't work for free, establish positive relationships with researchers, engage in constructive criticism with other artists

Sharing tips with one another, communicating, helping one another and offering constructive, positive critique. The supportive communities often found in groups of related artists is still developing in paleoart, perhaps due to the often too proud/too serious/too aggressively competitive/unsympathetic nature of the scientific community.

I'd rather not have to put up with people who almost religiously uphold theories or whatever as absolutes and demean or demonize others work for it including that which they hold dear. Usually not a problem in the professional scene but a problem in entry level for sure.

I think the most important thing is something paleoartists don't have much power over, that being public perception: I wish Western culture thought of dinosaurs as more than something for children, so adults who enjoy Paleontology we're perceived less as weirdos. In short, I wish the West was more like China.

try and find all possible sources of the organism being portrayed and find any evidence to support what the organism may have looked like

Getting their artwork out there and noticed.

I'm not sure what exactly could be done, though engagement with students and prospective artists is always a good start.

Providing amateurs with better rules, guidelines and references.

I think that's more on the shoulders of clients than the artists.

More outreach to schools, spread knowledge of the field

Look at non-paleo art as inspirations to keep paleo-illustrations more pleasing to the eye

Trying to branch out, and view the creatures they reconstruct as real animals.

Stop engaging in flame wars or clerical issues, stop fighting each other, stop creating factions, unite!

Adapt to changes in visual communication.

Free-access journals would be incredibly useful

Now we're just the little known community with small amount of awareness of our existing in society, so we should help each other and spreading more scientific art to the world.

Many paleoartists could take courses in science in college education, such as biology and geology, to help better support themselves outside of art for business.

Not sure

Get their pricing, invoices, contracts and licensing sorted!

I feel there is a lot of sexism and ableism happening in some parts of the community (particularly the deviantART paleo community) that drives away potentially great paleoartists.

Hmm, I don't know. But more people seeing scientifically accurate reconstructions (with a bit of educated speculation) is always good!

1. In certain spaces, where I am not open about my sexual and gender identity, I have seen displays of misogyny, racism, homophobia, and transphobia by others get ignored or even accepted. Speaking out against such things is critical if the paleoart community is to stay as varied as it is. Fortunately, a lot of great and popular artists and scientists on prominent social media platforms like Twitter are vocal in their support of paleoartists from minority groups. 2. There seems to sometimes be a reflex to both critique a person's art without first familiarise oneself with their work and take any critique personally without familiarising oneself with the point the critic is trying to make, especially among younger paleoartists. But even among professionals I have seen sometimes heated debates over things like the validity of using reference, using certain materials, or even reconstructing certain taxa. In a world of social media and the degree of depersonalisation that follows it, one should more frequently take a step back and consider whether certain comments are truly necessary.

1. Growing the audience/market for paleoart - creating more opportunities to share, exhibit, promote, and sell artwork. 2. Sharing more info on the practical aspects of creating/exhibiting/selling artwork. 3. Developing a collaborative culture—when artist egos combine with limited opportunities and a fetishization of 'accuracy', it is easy for us to become dismissive, insular, or toxic. We should resist that impulse in favor of fostering a vibrant, diverse community of paleoart practitioners."

Just help each other out

A more open, welcoming environment online would be a step in the right direction. Young artists should not be discouraged because of a lack of knowledge or skill, nor should any community practice in gatekeeping. The arts and sciences are for everyone. Most professionals don't need to be told this, but from personal experience it's my opinion that etiquette is lacking in many online communities.

More scientific illustration courses regarding paleoart

More accessible competitions

Absolutely. I would start by saying that the paleoart community really isn't making a good choice in terms of advertising it to new "game players", it always gives off such a "nerdy", boring, "complicated", dull or even almost "mathematical" process, and people obviously are instantly scared by this perspective and stay at bay, reasonably for what they know.

We have to make paleoart look more fun, interesting, captivating, surprising and creative to people, and stop building a wall around us with the words "Only smart people in" written on it. It might not be our intention, but it's totally what it looks like from afar.

So, let's start challenging people to play the game, encourage them and reassure them, that this, is a new world, a challenging world, but a rewarding and beautiful world all together."

Promoting art of other organisms besides dinosaurs

Make it easier for newer artists to become involved in the field of paleoart. Openness and guidance are essential. The fields of paleontology and paleoart often seem very closed-off and hard to get into for outsiders.

Be more open to new people looking to work in paleoart. Rather than getting angry over anatomical inaccuracies or outdated ideas, it's better to educate them rather than getting into heated discussions. Museums should also be more careful with the paleoartists they hire for murals and other media, to ensure no plagiarism and scientific accuracy.

Do not work for free

No, the current practices in ethics and so on are perfect

Take more inspiration from nonpaleoart artists

Unfortunately, I don't think there is much which can be done. Or if there is, I'm not sure what it is.

I just wish people could appreciate it more

Forming more cohesive ties to paleontologists and publicizing both fields to work in tandem.

Don't be smug

Most importantly, paleoartists should value their work and refuse to work for less than deserved! Secondly, they should stick to scientific facts and refuse to produce inaccurate or questionable paleoart when pressed by commissioners, even if this means losing a particular job opportunity. Last but not the least, they should keep high ethical and moral standards and do not copy the work of colleagues, or refuse to do so if asked by clients.

issuing books, exhibitions, using different art techniques, especially for kids

I think they are doing great as it is

Create art that appeals to people that don't have any interest in dinosaurs and other animals.

Classes. Lectures. Tutorials. Anatomy teachings.

Relentlessly attacking plagiarists and the clients who accept plagiarized work.

Excepting more young people into the realm of Paleoart and more detail on the environments of fossil habit

Not being so hostile over the attention to accuracy some artists have (i.e bashing someone's art over stylistic choices)

Work together to take down social media accounts that just post uncredited artwork, take down or spread awareness of bad actors, etc.

I don't know

I'm not sure!

It would be very useful for artists and scientists to come together to form a community where discoveries and data were shared directly for all

Move out if the field sometimes

They should be more speculative

Standing up for each other, which they're mostly doing.

not Plagiarise and keep in touch with the paleontologists

Don't be so elitist to the people just coming into the field as well as those who are not realistic artists. There's no good reason to run them out. They might even make the community better in the long run.

Not work for free.

More specialised meetings, exhibitions and a push for auctions, gallery displays.

Less elitism

Opening up the field stylistically. The vast majority of paleoart is done in a very realistic style. It is possible to reconstruct animals accurately without being realistic.

The thing that springs to mind is that well established, widely admired palaeoartists might provide more information about their processes. How exactly do they translate measurements from a lateral view skeletal onto a differently posed individual seen from a different angle? How precisely are areas of light and shadow referenced or thought through? How do they decide what size an original piece will be (if using trad. media?) Overall: how many of the decisions that go into the final piece are carefully, maybe even mathematically worked out, and how many of the decisions are more along the lines of 'this looks good / feels right'? However, I understand that there are a variety of reasons why any given palaeoartist might not want to be completely transparent about their process.

Less snarking and squabbling over tiny errors, esp. toward beginner artists and in forums/artist comments. More helpful support & beginner's tutorials. More sharing of sources.

I don't know

Support women, those of the LGBT community, people of color, and minorities and bring their work to the forefront.

More variety in art styles and art forms to elevate ourselves among other types of arts. Palaeoart at the moment is still too grounded and obsessed with faithful realistic reconstructions to blend with other art disciplines.

Advocating for better funding for science as a whole. Better funding might lead to more support for science-adjacent jobs in general.

Ensure that creators are adequately compensated for producing and displaying palaeoart

I have not really gotten myself out there doing this, but something that helps with my paleontology career in general at such a young age is to just get myself out there.

artists aren't always the best social communicators - let paleontologists know you're out there!

Not sure

Promoting more women, trans folks, and non-binary people

I feel that paleoartists need to be more inclusive when it comes to people of different genders, sexual orientations, POC, with disabilities and with various ethnicities and artistic skillsets (beyond male, pale and privileged). I feel that the people that are showcased or who earn awards are those who are privileged, versus those who are not, and this needs to change. I also feel those same individuals are the ones who get recognized work-wise and tend to sell more art. Seeing other artists as competition versus people to work with is another issue, on top of being overly critical of new artists and their work. Seeing and encouraging potential artists is best, rather than pushing others away.

I think more paleoartists should work on smaller/less charismatic fauna, especially invertebrates and fish. Plants, too. Prehistoric plants are beautiful, but I hardly ever see art of them.

Raising prices, refusing to take work for free, boosting each other up instead of treating each other like competition

Is there a need/desire for a formal group/organization? I know that contributors here have sought to create forums for discussion and even codes of best practices which are phenomenal for Paleoart. Maybe I'm not digitally minded enough and the survey and things like LITC are more than adequate?

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make it easier to get in contact with people needing paleoart- i've no idea how this industry works, honestly.

Offer guidance and advice to more inexperienced artists and try to help raise awareness for less recognized artists.

Keep on reaching for higher quality.

Be more adamant and realistic with institutional clientele; if they 'can't afford' your rates and are considering someone who lacks the rigor to produce quality, long lasting pieces, they need to know the disservice they are doing to the public discourse; museums are a place of learning and are a huge influence to the public, if the paleoart suffers, so too does that learning. Scicomm is crucial!

just keep holding fast, the actual community is already well directed



Ask enough payment for their art and illustrations

Working together to create communities and real career opportunities for aspiring paleoartists.

Continuing a great community, and although I don't post a huge amount of my work it's always good to see constructive criticism from all ranges of professionalism. And of course, more credit to the inspirations behind a piece of work if necessary, not just for artistic validation but also to show a clear progression of ideas.

Continue to do wonderful work, support each other, and "demand" values equal to the time and talent that they put into their work.

Better education about pricing and professional practices in illustration. Doing work for free or speculative projects drags down prices industry-wide and makes it unsustainable to people to become better skilled professionals--depriving us of benefiting from the paleoart masters of the future.

Share details of commissions, help clients understand what our work is worth.

Like any field, there's a little bit of--I wouldn't say 'gatekeeping'--but focus on the 'big names', which of course there should be (especially when they're people like Mark Witton who are constantly encouraging others to take palaeoart up for themselves). That can't quite be helped, and I suppose it's good to have people to look up to. However, perhaps more of a community focus on working to give everyone complete access to the scientific literature would be a desirable thing.

Get paid lots of money because it's hard enough to be an artist so imagine all of your subjects being dead/a pile of bones

Ideally it would be great if we had guidelines (similar to the Association of Medical Illustrators and the Graphic Artists Guild Handbook) for pricing, licensing and contracts so that we don't undercut the market and our own self-worth. Since competition is getting more intense every year it unfortunately forces some of us to drop our rates to get the job to pay our bills. I realize not all paleo artist are equally talented but we should all still strive to achieve an equal baseline

1) Credit your sources, references, photos, and major influences. Uncredited photobashing is my current pet peeve. If you use a photo directly in your illustration (tracing over it counts as directly), you should be ethically obligated to credit that source unless it is your own. Hold people to standards, even if they're nice people or famous!

2) Try to carefully consider the difference between a standard of accuracy for a particular taxon and what amounts to a meme. Too many reasonable but speculative opinions about some particular thing have turned into literal memes that people just copy endlessly without actually reading the source material and making up their own minds. (E.g., Archaeopteryx is completely solid black because one covert was black—which now might not even belong to Archie!). Think for yourself, read the research.

be more Speculative, less constricted to conservative ideas, Live a little.

Develop standard rate ranges, maybe?

I don't know. I think its competitive, but there aren't a lot of sources for funding.

Not sure about the artists themselves, but I wish finding emotional and financial support for the work was easier.

Stop drawing and talking past one another. Interactivity and cooperation improves everyone, but every artist also wants to compete for limited resources. While this is important to many, as their lifeblood, the process becomes cutthroat to the least of us, and throttles innovation and exposure. Artists should be supporting and sharing on social media others' works when possible -- perhaps not more than their own, but more than they do now.

Giving tips could improve the work of other artists.

Not really, these things tend to be market driven, and as such out of individual artists hands

Share their research and links

There can often be a disconnect between science and art, but paleoart is certainly a good way to bring the two worlds together. It's important to showcase this particular type of art as more than just art, but an integral part of paleontology. The more professional we can be, the more serious our art will be taken.

Be better business people. Be better artists. Be better scientists.

To do more. The more we work, and more palaeoart is done, more artists and scientists may pursue it as a career.

Continue to promote everyone they respect

Paleoart is slowly spreading into forms of media that reach the public better, such as documentaries and books, however mockumentaries are rampant. Perhaps if paleoartists were to expand paleoart into more common media forms it would ease the pressure on the field?

Note sources/speculative elements

Be more supportive of each other.

I had never heard of paleoart before YDaW's mention of them in a short video segment. They just need to get the word out that this is a lucrative business to potential students. That might help show employers that these people exist to be hired on big movie/tv productions.

I think most of the work to be done in improving opportunities is out of the hands of paleoartists themselves, and relies more on other media outlets in seeing the worth of paleoart and its importance to this branch of science.

I know that tracing and uploading art without permission is rampant. I don't know what to do about it other than to report offenders but it is an unfortunate issue.

Im not sure if paleoartists are in control of this, but perhaps give a standard of what the creatures may have looked like? Like a list of features that most definitely were there (like how carnotaurus was very thick in the tail), sometimes its hard to differentiate speculation from fact when trying to find proper information for accurate drawings, and im not smart enough for a lot of scientific papers. Makes me feel like im drawing them wrong and while i do love just drawing whatever, i want to have some accurate dinosaurs or plant life when I try to draw a scene. Its hard to really get certain head shapes right without reference and sometimes popular shapes used in a lot of art was designed by someone rather than a feature the animal actually had.

Supporting younger paleoartists, as well as ones that don't do photorealism in their work, yet have realistic proportions and colorations.

Don't work for free, make better universal contracts available and widely known.

Well I think that museums, and paleontologists should always be looking for new paleo artists to help with reconstructions of their finds. I also think that is very important to keep traditional paleo art and sculpture alive! I think to do a problem that we're constantly looking for digital art when trying to reconstruct the past.

Aside from spreading their work as much as possible, I don't see much of a chance. Big publishers will always choose the cheapest option. Namely the 3D generated models from 2003 Dorling Kindersley is using for the past 10 years and the very crude doodles of Rebecca from Accounting which she drew all in one afternoon whilst watching Jurassic Park for "accuracy", in which the creatures are less anatomically correct as a rubber allosaurus figurine made in China in 1993.

Resist shortcuts to artistic popularity and/or income. Making cool images that are inaccurate or misleading is always wrong in the field of scientific illustration. One can do both.

Getting into paleoart isn't difficult, what's difficult is finding information on how the animals lived. Society at large thinks of pre-historic animals as these big, hulking, scary, alien animals that live by aggression and die fighting, while really they were just... Animals. People uninterested in palaeontology depicting dinosaurs or the megafauna of the ice age always get more attention than the people who actually do their research and actually care about being true to the creatures of the past, and we end up with a stigma against accurate paleoart. Paleoart isn't particularly hard to get to, but letting go of how we imagined dinosaurs in our collective childhoods is, for most people. This isn't about paleoart being more accessible, it already is, it's about everyone who has even a passing interest in the extinct animals actually doing their research so that everyone respects the paleoart community more.

I feel paleoartists could be more welcomed within the filming/game industry at large. While there's some examples such as David Krentz, and Wayne Barlowe achieving that very opportunity, the current younger generation of paleoartists should be just as accepted as well.

More openness for how to get involved. It's a bit like navigating a labyrinth with no light on your own, and it isn't as welcoming to new artists as it could be. A lot of the time there isn't a lot of teaching of where to get good reference or to navigate the science side of the industry and the language is far from clear. For those of us who are artists, not scientists, this is pretty overwhelming.

As I am currently a paleontology student, I briefly considered pursuing paleoartistry as more than a hobby--however, I found it near impossible to find any scientific illustration courses/degrees, and am just honestly not sure what resources there are for aspiring artists. If there was a better way to connect or gain instruction in the field besides hunting down blog posts, then this would be incredibly helpful.

Get the word out there for it to be an option for art students. Having the opportunity to work with scientists is a great way to get your foot in the door to any form of scientific illustration, as well as a source to put in your resume.

I come from a fine arts background, and though I have a biology minor under my belt (or at least I will in a few weeks) that includes a few palaeontology courses I still have little to no idea of how to get into the field of paleo

art, how to go about getting commissions, or what sources I should go to for reference or information, or if it's a viable option for me as far as income goes.

I feel more experienced paleoartists should not hesitate to give advice to someone new in the field.

Perhaps forming a larger community to combat issues and help each other

as more people get exposed to paleo art I think there should be a more defined line between paleo art- an up to date reimagining of an extinct animal which can be backed using science theories- and drawing dinosaurs like those seen in most news articles which talk about a new discovery which really isn't the fault of paleo artists

If any paleoartists are going into either an art or science bachelor, then to utilise the other field as much as possible. I.e. if going to a science bachelor, bring the artistic skill and knowledge and art history into projects. And to use them as topics as talks or presentations when needed. This could help lower the divide between art and science.

I'm not sure. This field is very diverse (which is good!) which can make it difficult to form a single cohesive strategy that works for everyone. That said, I have a feeling artist guilds like 252MYA and Blue Rhino might be a big part of the solution, especially if their clients get used to paying paleoartists fair wages. Those expectations may passively improve conditions for independent artists in the future.

Following up to date evidence for prehistoric animals, e.g. feathering in raptors, universally would improve credibility overall and reduce disputes when it comes to some scientists rejecting evidence due to inaccurate depictions of paleoart.

Gentle guidance for newcomers and less elitism.

Yes, mostly just instead of portraying prehistoric creatures as monsters, they could portray them as just animals like any other. They are no longer here, but they were still just animals, not monsters.

When scientists write papers I think it would be a good idea to make them open access so poor, uneducated people can study them too and make better choices about their art.

Proving more sources/ reasoning as to why a particular reconstruction was chosen. Also more focus on invertebrates! Dinosaurs are cool, but there's a lot of other prehistoric life.

To be more engaging with the general public, or have a partnership with other studies/media companies, to educate a more wider audiences. Like, for example, to team up with a zoo and do a blasted of a past day. Where for a day, there will be a extinct animal visiting the zoo, (In a Jurassic park inspired way) the "handler" will presenting one of the animals the audiences demonstrate, what it could of looked like, and extinct animal (which will be more like a puppet) will behave accordantly. More like how zookeepers will put on a show with their birds.

Some people just getting into paleoart are criticized so harshly that they become afraid to even draw extinct creatures in the first place. I know people are tired of seeing outdated tropes, but this cutthroat attitude towards beginners is really harsh and driving away even very talented artists.

Mentor

Bigger social media presence, let people know that creators don't know for sure and a lot of a restoration is a mix of speculation and creativity. It's unique to the artist

Making jargon/elitism less of a barrier for new artists may be useful. The harshness of criticism, even when well-intentioned, can turn otherwise good artists who wish to improve away from the field.

Make it known to media that depicting extinct life in a scientifically accurate way is important

Not sure... maybe more jobs for it? I would love to do paleoart as a profession but I'm scared I may be held back by the academic sides of things

By branching out to other mediums and art forms. For instance I don't know of many who have done comics for education, or how-to-draw guides for showing people how knowing paleontology can be a useful tool for creature design in sci-fi and fantasy. I also don't see sound artists even mentioned as existing in this survey. Surely there are people interested in reconstructing the sounds of ancient dinosaurs or sea critters. What about people who create physical models?

There's really nowhere in the world of art that paleontology can't be. And when we branch out we open the story of Earth to new audiences.

Stop employing the ethically problematic practices noted above.

Be speculative, but not to the point where things just don't make sense from an anatomical perspective or without consulting the range of possibilities with experts on the subject.

More accessibility! I do paleoart as a hobby, but I don't know where to share art beyond my circle of friends and fans of my art...

Mentioning their speculations or mentioning that an artwork is out of date.

Internships, or art classes

Applying more guidelines used by other illustrators, in matter of payment and using others work etc.

Preventing plagiarism of art

Teach classes about the process and execution of paleoart.

Encourage children to draw and learn about dinosaurs and have more outreach to the general public

More classes not just art techniques but how to get a proper portfolio, teaching how to focus on different targets (science for adults, for kids, how to work or depict images according to each demographic). Maybe trying to get more involved in the traditional art schools to show another way of making a living that sometimes people don't know it exists).

You've gotta be inclusive. The sciences have become a little too pretentious these days, and it makes potential newcomers feel unwelcome. Much of paleoart is incredibly speculative, even if it has scientific study backing it up. Therefore differences between artists shouldn't be a cause for conflict, but rather discourse.

I think the biggest downfalls are in the art area, not the science. Paleoartists need to be paid for their full value, and clients must recognize exactly what that value is. There is an issue in almost every art field where artists will severely undercharge for their work, creating a very low standard in the eyes of clients. Paleoart is extremely valuable and artists work very hard to create the best product possible, so we should be paid accordingly!

Not Paleo Artists. I think the governments across the world could provide more funding to museums so more artists can make a living. Many exhibits are outdated and need to be adjusted in terms of what we know now about these animals.

Loosen up. I think there is a lot of snobishness and gatekeeping going on. Many people with a respectable knowledge and interested in earnest depictions of fossil species end up scaring away a lot of "casual" enthusiasts that do not meet their academic standards.

Create a corporation of all the professional paleoartists and divide up the workload so that pay becomes structured.

More co-operation

Stop working alone for the joy of work. Although there are situations where art is offered free of charge and for a good cause, if the artist does not take himself seriously and charges for his work, nobody will take it seriously, and paid work generates commitments in both directions, and a committed artist is a professional.

Being professional leads us to take care of our sources of information and to offer a truthful product, it takes us to take care of our plagiarism works, and to transmit our technical knowledge to other artists with better dedication.

Address copyright issues. When I set up my own website, no one could even tell me who owns the copyrights on my own artwork in scientific journals! Or rather, everyone told me something different. Work is also copied without credit. In part, this has been a tradition within the scientific community for a long time, and had few repercussions when scientists often did their own illustrations. When I draw an illustration for a scientific article in a peer-reviewed journal, it becomes part of the scientific record and can be cited, copied, and recopied. It is not mine anymore, and I'm ok with that; it's more important to me that my drawings are out there. But a little courtesy would go a long way!

Be more open about their design processes, it's really helpful for developing palaeoartists to see where a professional piece of palaeoart comes from and the different stages that it goes through.

looking out for each other is one, maybe being more open-minded about opportunities to highlight the discipline and individuals within it

Take risks, pursued not only the anatomical accuracy of their work but create authentic pieces of ART. Using original stylistics, experimentation, give life not only with anatomy's, but with colors and ambitious landscapes.

All the things I can think of that need to improve (diversity among artists, less need to compete with inaccurate public images, stronger support from non-artistic scientists) are things that require an overhaul on a separate level from the paleoartists themselves. If that makes sense?

All the problems need other things to improve before anything an artist does will make a difference.

Create a society of paleoartist

Nothing that many aren't already doing (e.g. networking on social media and spreading each other's work)

Reach out to aspiring paleoartists and guide them. I didn't know paleoart was a thing until I started encountering it on Tumblr. Last year, I discovered you could dedicate your life to paleoart. I doodle dinosaurs, I never imagined

I could apply this to an actual job. I'm from a third world country, there's not many open positions for paleoartist, but it would have been nice to know that it was possible somewhere.

Probably, but I'm not sure what that would be.

Stick up for ourselves, make our cases. It's an important scientific need, and allows for a lot of creativity while helping others understand the discoveries better through visual media.

Pushing harder for more accurate portrayals in media

Not so much the artists as the laws. There should be stricter laws to protect the artists and their work

Stopping plagiarizing practices, giving credit where credit is due, and avoid the use of outdated or not-sustained tropes.

While speculating is ok, doing so with the correct scientific bases more than with mere imagination. This because speculating like that can bring misunderstandings and so on. The other way is less dependent on them, but is promoting their work so it reaches a greater audience.

not be so hung up on digital and 3d imagery. it's not the end all be all of art.

Try to open courses or some way to help the people that want to be a professional paleoartist.

It is rather male STEM dominated

Sometimes the commitment to representational accuracy can seem to reify a model of the relationship of art to science that I am uncomfortable with.

I think the paleo and art communities are too separate and both dismisses the other with rare exceptions. This has run-on effects. In the art sphere, paleoart is rarely treated more seriously than fan-art communities and in paleoart there is both a constriction of techniques/styles and a community which is sometimes overzealous in enforcing this, like dismissing old artwork as "wrong" or "inaccurate" without acknowledging its aesthetic qualities or context. Worse, I've seen people (often kids!) torn to shreds over their "inaccurate" drawings online. That hasn't happened to me but if it did and I was younger or just beginning to explore the field it would really shake my confidence and scare me off, and I think some of those kids really have been pushed out that way. I'm not saying everyone's crummy doodles should receive uniform praise, that's just an example of the kind of behavior I mean. This gate keeping seems to be part of a broader problem where the art in paleoart is honed in one highly specific style of 'natural realism' like a nature documentary. Paleontologists were once kids themselves, reared on dream-images of King Kong and Jurassic Park. Paleoartists should be free to not just speculate but experiment and look to new horizons to new techniques, to new 'ways of seeing', to surrealism and outsider art, and representations devised from diverse cultures and perspectives. Paleoart should also be free to ask more questions and engage more topics. It should be able to engage with science as well as with the historical and cultural contexts.

Charge big institutions more. This is difficult, technically-challenging work. If your client can pay well (e.g. a museum), raise your price accordingly. That said, it's OK to do a few freebies or discounted works for average-income private individuals.

More researchers should pay attention to have fitting paleoart accompanying press releases etc. about their research (don't just treat it as last minute tagged-on eye catchers). Funding should be available for researchers

to commission artwork, without the money missing on the research end of funding. This would create an atmosphere that appreciates paleoart more in the research community.

More access to scientific data for random, unaffiliated art people! Surely a better system for funding museums and researchers exists besides locking everything behind giant paywalls

More community interaction. Sharing information so we can all learn and grow the industry together.

Networking with each other more, possibly.

Lol ok, here comes a rant, bear with me. A message I hope every member of the community will take to heart -

Be nice to each other! Don't talk behind people's backs or badmouth anyone, no matter how superior you think your work or your knowledge is. Disparaging others' work doesn't make you look competent, it makes you look petty and hard to work with. I get frustrated with the negativity and tribalism (lips vs lipless, feathered vs scaled tyrannosaurs, tubby vs lean, fanciful vs rigorous reconstructions etc. etc.). Speak truthfully, give your honest professional opinion when appropriate. But do it in a kind way, whether the artist is present or not. That's the biggest thing.

Be kind to everyone. Be kind to other artists, staff, even people outside the museum in ordinary life. I saw someone recently lose a potential museum job opportunity because he had been unkind on social media to someone who had nothing to do with the museum community - but the staff saw that the attitude was toxic, so his name was not brought up in the hiring meeting. This was a dream job for him, and he will never know how close he was, or that his attitude on Facebook lost him any chance for him on that go-round. Hopefully he becomes wiser and is able to find another opportunity, because he really was a talent. That's the thing, though. Talent gets you clients, but kindness creates relationships - which are valuable of themselves, but one happy outcome also tends to be repeat clients. Be a good person. Think less about competition and more about creating value for everyone, including "the competition." It will create a more positive and supportive community that is more pleasant to work in, and will also increase individual work opportunities.

Keep on' truckin' and share experiences with others. Stick up for others and talk out about bad practises.

They could popularize the meme that accepting criticism is the most important thing in creating scientific art. Because unfortunately some paleoartists have problems with it. This creates pretty toxic atmosphere which isn't good

Yes. There needs to be more educational and career opportunities. People need to know that there is a place for them in the scientific community. We also need to quit bashing those fellow artists that draw influence from entertainment and from speculative biology.

Encouraging people that likes "Dinosaurs" like, for example, an 7 year old cousin of yours

take everything they read with a grain of salt

Being more supportive of others ideas, allowing for easier access for those that don't have the opportunities like some do, as well as being able to connect better with other artists that are already in the field or attempting to gain entry into it. Especially allowing more diversity within the community.

MAKE MORE PALEOART



Critique art better, critique shouldn't be exclusively focused on accuracy.

I think a couple of big issues are very present in the paleoart community (the larger part of it, at least, not necessarily the ones working professionally), parts of which are a big lack of understanding fundamentals of art (proportion, perspective, light and shadows etc.) as well as an over-the-top drive to create ever more speculative art to outcompete each other. Speculation might be good if asked for, and for personal enjoyment, but it contradicts the notion that it should also be accurate. Something cannot be accurate if a feature is only speculated on. Especially for work done for publications and articles, these speculations should not get out of hand and should also, if being used, make sense in a physical context (you cannot put long, draping feather quills down half the neck on a brachiosaur simply because 'there's no evidence against it', since it doesn't make sense in a way of how physical objects interact with tissue. I feel like often extant taxa are being ignored simply to speculate, because 'dinosaurs are extinct', whereas the Scientific approach should be to cross-reference the closest living relatives or the most similar in ecotype in order to stay as accurate as possible (whatever that may mean...)).

Just like how Science needs to move closer with Paleoart again, Paleoart needs to get a better understanding of how Science works.

Being more open to newcomers, translating various articles to their own (if any) native languages

Other than online courses or tutorials I don't think there is much more paleoartists can do for people aspiring to become better at it. Becoming a good artist is a personal journey in my opinion, and one made of trials and errors.

idk I want to make money drawing weird creatures so I hope that's an opportunity "the field" will some day extend to everyone who wants the same

Perhaps start a union?

Remember new artists need a way to learn and grow as artists as well, creating a master copy of other artists work is how many still learn. As long as the new artists aren't being compensated for the work then take it as flattery and help them by constructively critiquing their work not by tearing them apart.

Collaborate way more, integrate other sciences into their work (e.g. aerodynamics when depicting a pterosaur), stay more constructive and less "toxic" when criticizing

No, I think it is a simple question of supply/demand. There is not a lot of monetary demand for paleoart, inherently restricting the opportunities to make commercial paleoart.

Interact with their community

Improve the quality of their works

More access to publications, easier to read publications and communication with scientists.

Relax with the nitpicking of artwork shared online.

There doesn't seem to be an organized paleoart community, maybe that would help.

Not grossly underbidding others, not plagiarizing, in some cases better learning anatomy.

Supporting fair use of personal work, and making prehistoric life an easily-accessible, reliable, subject to research online. If every researcher had a trustworthy blog like Mark Witton and Darren Naish, amateurs like me would all be much more knowledgeable for it.

We should be advocating for more staff positions. Most museums don't have a staff artist, or they don't think they need one. But we should be opening these doors.

Not that I can personally think off, although there are probably plenty things rthat could happen

perhaps making interactive and articulated digital skeletons for download?

Yes, we can educate ourselves better about copyright laws and their infractions. I have sought professional advice on these subjects, and I have found it very useful. That's the reason I don't mark any option in the "ethically questionable" question. If we know how to ask about image ´s uses and authorizations ( And when they can be applied or not) We have more chances to do a better work.

I believe that this allows Us more opportunities than just following a direct order "Do not take pictures from others". If we are more aware of the uses and practices of copyright, I suspect that we will have a more civilized approach to these issues."

For those who are more experienced with the breakdowns and studies needed to make decent Paleoart, tutorials and such are amazing ways to help newbies figure out how to go at reconstructing a creature from the ground up.

As far as I have been able to see, paleoart is at the best position it's ever been. Reconstructions of ancient animals are featured in everything from games to tv shows and there are more paleoart (and paleontology in general) books being made nowadays than, I think, ever before. If people are unhappy with their conditions and opportunities, speaking up about it usually works wonders but in my opinion the field is already experiencing a very positive trend.

Not sure but minimum rates are very helpful in entertainment

supporting and educating beginners.

Just sharing other pieces of work they like or admire other than their own. And to stop bashing on art who only create a certain creature or stick to only dinosaurs

encourage new paleontologists and artists to see this style of art, and how beautiful it can be.

No thoughts

Have more paleoart exhibitions. Paleoartist conferences (not only in the US or UK) where we can meet and learn from each other, get to know each other. More social media platforms where we can interact. Teach about paleoart! There is i.m.o. still too much "Jurassic Park" paleoart around. Maybe a degree on Paleoart? A platform where aspiring paleoartists can share their portfolio, where it can be seen by scientists who would like to collaborate with a paleoartist and where they can contact the artist.

To return to study arts and sciences, to innovate in their jobs

More exposure

Not sure.

I can't think of any

No, I don't really have any suggestions

Haven't really thought about it much.

Stop attacking young/beginning artists for mistakes; be more constructive with criticisms.

Acknowledge that not all art of prehistoric life is meant to be educational, and don't attack inaccuracies when the work isn't meant to be paleoart.

Continue to communicate on best practices within the field; strive to reduce plagiarism and unfair business practices.

Don't undercut pricing

"I think people could be a little more forgiving of people who draw purposely inaccurate animals. It's completely possible to like inaccurate and accurate animals at the same time, they aren't exclusive to each other. At the same time

I think people should recognize if their reconstruction may be more speculative than informed, and state as such, along with the reasons for said speculation in order to encourage healthy debate. Otherwise, people need to pop their ego bubbles on all sides, and stop being condescending to people who may not know as much. I see far too much of people saying things like, "Lmao, well actually its like \_", just basically mansplaining, which is seriously off putting and pretentious to most people. I'm certainly less inclined to listen to such people, regardless of whether they're right or not. "

Some kind of paleoart society might be nice?

I don't work professionally in this field and don't want to, so I really can't comment on this. However, I do have to say, it's a much more thriving community that archaeological illustration is, and I think that alone is great. Not to mention that paleontologists seem to respect paleoart quite highly.

Not sure. It's a pretty closed (and specific, taking in count all the research one has to do, along with the at least basic biological terminology and concepts) field anyway. I'd assume that if there is a fresh paleoartist who is really dedicated to getting a job in the field, then the established paleoartist could spread the word about them or give them an opportunity to work on a smaller projects at museums (assuming that the person actually lives somewhere where there is a museum and a paleoartist to be their back).

More paleoartists should be offering workshops or tutorials on art or research techniques, so that new people aren't turned off by a perceived lack of talent for either skill.

They could be writing more paleoart and paleontology guides, along with being involved in other forms of reaching out to people that may be interested without even realizing it.

I'm self-taught and I wish there were courses to learn how to draw paleoart (learning how to create an animal from fossil)

Making it popular and spreading it actually the world is necessary. Country like India, where I am from, there is hardly any popularity regarding paleoarts. Online internships, courses at minimum rates should be encouraged by famous paleoartists in these countries

I think palaeoartists should be providing more resources and especially those that helped them reach their level. Share what they learned and give insight to the process of palaeoart.

Increasing transparency on the process as much as possible without breaching publication embargos

More sense of community, and that their work exists on a spectrum with other forms of art. A scientific paleo-illustrator is not seeking the same outcomes as a fine artist or cartoonist, and all these fields are worthy of respect.

If I would know that, I would do it better xD

I feel like the community could be a bit more supportive and constructive towards its members. Then again, I'm pretty new to this, so what do I know?

Unionising.

It's not up to the artists, but the consumers.

I don't believe so everything seems good though I could be wrong

May be offer alliances between palaeoartists, find a way to still motivated to persist inside the world of palaeoart, improve mechanisms for show and promote the work.

Create a formal guild-style organization with agreed-upon standards

More knowledge about the field

I think more institutions should seek outside paleoartists when doing overhauls on exhibits, merchandise and media related to the changes. So often you see the same images reused so it sparks no excitement to the people you want to come and visit.

There is frequent drama within the paleoart community and I think some of that hostility needs to stop if we want to create a positive work environment.

Stop making it closed off to those that can't afford a degree or time to do one

I have never seen a place where opportunities or grants are advertised in the UK, perhaps something like this could be created?

Some of the more famous paleoartists could suggest names of their favourite new paleoartists to their followers. Making more guides like the one Mark Witton wrote to help aspiring or newbie paleoartists would help as well. Maybe trying to get a big museum to host a paleoart exhibition would help the field too.

Fewer fights over what "counts." More room for a range of styles from scientifically rigorous to abstract. I feel like everyone is fighting for the one true CORRECT style, when the strength is in the variety.

Possibly, getting increased access to specimens for more realistic and accurate designs, with authorisation (of course) to the fossils by specialists and professionals, ensuring no one is damaging them.

I hope I don't sound bitter here, but certain palaeoartists seem to discuss the field in quite dismissive ways, heavily criticising others (sometimes indirectly) while promoting themselves as the best artists in the field, and promoting their friends. I'm all for constructive criticism, but this often seems like sniping at others, many of whom are not professional and only doing their best to contribute...and the end result is the field seems like a closed shop. If I am honest this has really affected my palaeoart in that I don't produce or share anywhere near what I used to, because I feel it is not respected or valued by my peers in the field. I could be in the wrong here and it's just my perspective from where I am really, and maybe it is more about me than about them! Just something that can happen when you have lots of people publically criticising things.

Artists need to advocate for themselves more effectively. We so often get caught up in our art and forget that we need to fight for the chance to be seen and be supported. We need to be more actively sharing our work and the work of our colleagues (with permission and credit, of course!) to get more visibility of the meaningfulness and beauty of the work we create.

Showing their work off to artists outside the paleoart community.

Being less toxic about accuracy

Stop being pretentious, elitist and attacking other artist's work. I see this often and it gives a very bad image. Also stop working for free or badly paid

Be more welcoming

To speak out when someone has obviously stolen pieces from other artist and put in one large piece for a museum institute, totally not looking at the Field Museum.

Do the best work they can.

Return to the "history of life" books and their approach; there aren't only dinosaurs.

Creating a more welcoming and encouraging atmosphere within the community (by giving more constructive rather than destructive criticism, which is especially necessary on online platforms like Twitter) would be helpful not only for people experienced in the field but especially for newcomers (like me) to not be discouraged and continue creating art and improving.

Support one another instead of competing. I think there's plenty of room for every artist to find their niche within the field of paleoart, and we can accomplish so much more by working together.

Probably, but I can't think of anything offhand.

I'm not really sure, but it does seem that people new to paleoart often don't know where to research and it can be hard to learn the basics of reconstructing extinct species(Mark Witton's Palaeoartist's Handbook is a huge help with this ofc)

Much less gatekeeping and snobbery. The 'Palaeoartists' group on Facebook is great, but Jesus, it self-sabotages its potential popularity all the time by being incredibly strict and unwelcoming to people who may not know

better sometimes. And, you know, there's a lot of the big names in palaeoart who (naturally, and obviously) mostly just talk to each other. It's easy to feel insignificant and excluded.

I think less gatekeeping would be the biggest thing for the paleoartist community. I myself consider myself a partial paleoartist, but I'm nervous to join any paleoart communities due to how insane picky and critical the community can be. I try my best to have my art be at least mostly accurate, yet I can't help but to be scared that if I post my paleoart that it will just be met with extreme criticism. I'm all for criticism if asked for, but unwarranted criticism is very discouraging and makes me more reluctant to even consider posting let alone make paleoart.